



Welcome Back to the Talk of the Town Hotel & Beach Club

Aruba's first tourist hotel, originally opened by Ike Cohen in 1946 as the Coral-Strand Hotel has been through many incarnations in the past years, but operating partner Ed Malone of Americana fame has brought it back under the name that made it famous, The Talk of the Town.

One of the first sights that will greet tourists as they depart the airport and enter Oranjestad will be the "Now Open" sign, a welcome sight for many that have nostalgic memories of fine times at The Talk of the Town. On Wednesday afternoon, partners Ed Malone and Francisco Yanes invited the local press to take a tour conducted by hotel manager Annalies Ponson of the newly renovated facility, which has been receiving guests since January.

With the projected investment of one and a half million florin, (\$900,000) they have completed the initial renovations that have spruced up the "front of the house" the areas most used by guests, including fifty-one of the hotel's sixty-three rooms. The results are impressive. A beautiful tropical façade and terracotta tiled lobby greets visitors on their arrival, and the former "Moonlight Grill" has been converted into a cozy bar and lounge with an intimate dining area under the Gazebo serving a simple menu for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Breakfast is included in the price of a room for the night. The charming lounge offers a lovely view of the pool deck while enjoying a break from the sun and a refreshing island concoction, and is open to hotel and local guests that which to relax with an after hours cocktail and snacks in the tranquil ambiance. The rooms have been completely refurbished, with retiled bathrooms and new fixtures, equipped with microwave ovens, refrigerator, cable TV, clock radios, and ceiling fans. A completely new air conditioning system has been installed for client comfort. The partners feel this dramatic change has been very quick, and they are actually ahead of schedule for the complete renovation of the facility.

In addition, there is a partnership with the Havana Beach Club providing access to one of Aruba's most unique beaches and all of the Beach Club amenities. The S.E.A. Fly 'n Dive Scuba shop adjacent to the Beach Club will allow for package vacations with one of the island's top dive operators.

Ed Malone and Francisco Yanes outlined plans for The Talk of the Town to provide many amenities for what has become the major portion of its clientele, the business traveler. The hotel's close proximity to Aruba's commercial center has made it popular with the increasing number of visitors here on business, and the hotel will soon include a self service commerce center, with Internet access for each guest room and three meeting rooms. Presently, the majority of the guests are coming from Europe, where the taste for smaller resorts is the norm. As Ed Malone states, "A stay at will always be very value oriented."

The partners confessed they are receiving interest from many visitors that remember the Talk of the Town from "way back when," and has a loyal following that is happy to see the hotel being brought back to its days of glory. The facility holds very special memories for many Arubians and foreign visitors and the management consider it in a very unique position to create new memories. "Nearly all the staff at the hotel has a very emotional and nostalgic connection to the Talk of the Town, and are very excited to be a part of its revitalization," states Ed Malone, "we hope that everyone visits Aruba's newest, oldest tourism product, and takes advantage of the new facilities."